



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Kind: Western Wisconsin Benefits From Renewable Energy Grants; Cow Power

Washington, DC – U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) praised the success of the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Program today as U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman stopped in Bloomer, WI to announce federal funding for western Wisconsin projects.

“As a leading proponent of renewable energy initiatives, I am pleased to see these federal dollars delivered to western Wisconsin, especially since the Bush Administration sought to cut the program in half, until House Democrats stopped that effort dead in its tracks and restored these crucial funds,” stated Rep. Kind.

The Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Program was created in the 2002 Farm Bill and provides \$23 million for mandatory loans, loan guarantees, and grants to farmers, ranchers, and rural small business to purchase renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements. The Bush Administration’s 2005 budget sought to cut funds by \$12 million. Kind supported an amendment to the 2005 Agriculture Appropriations bill that restored the money.

Kind, noting that the Secretary also visited a methane digester plant in Elk Mound, praised the progress in the development of such waste-to-energy projects. In the 2002 Farm Bill, Rep. Kind was responsible for including funding for renewable energy technology such as methane-fired electricity generators found on the farm Sec. Veneman visited.

“Digester systems open up the energy market to dairy farmers and provide the opportunity for additional profits,” said Kind. “It is also an innovative solution to controlling animal waste and an important piece in the puzzle in achieving energy independence. But this technology is pricey, and these grants are critical to support the initial investment.”